

How far do the sources agree wolsley was disliked because he acted like an alter r...



Source 1, by Polydore Virgil, states that Wolsey was disliked and 'detested' by everyone in the country during his time. From this it is easy to gather an image of the extent of the hatred focused towards Wolsey. The source then goes on to say 'his arrogance and ambition aroused against himself the hatred of the whole country'. Firstly this shows that Wolsey intended to propel himself into the highest and most powerful positions in the country, this is an attribute of a monarch demonstrating Alter Rex like qualities. Secondly this shows that his ambition brought about the countries hatred for himself as his power increased so too did his arrogance. 'Indeed detested by everyone because he assumed that he could undertake nearly all office if state by himself' this line sums up the answer to the question. It's shown that he is trying to assume every role effectively making him King acting completely like an Alter Rex. However Polydore Vergil had a heavy grudge against Wolsey so the sources reliability is limited.

However the source agrees with Source 2, by Edward Hall where he says 'to be installed or enthroned at York... & caused a throne to be erected in Cathedral Church of such height and design as was never seen before...' This shows that not only was he being an Alter Rex in the sense that he's erecting a throne but it undermines the Kings power showing a desire to rise in power to be level or above that of Henry VIII . This displeased Henry ' he sent letters...to arrest the cardinal.' This shows even the King disapproves of his Alter Rex like qualities. This source was written by the contemporary Edward Hall making it safe to assume it's a reliable source and thus can be used to prove Source 1 has some truth despite the bias of Polydore Vergil and both sources strongly agree that Wolsey was disliked not just by the people but by

the king for his Alter Rex like actions however source 1 must be taken with a grain of salt due to the grudge Polydore Vergil held against Wolsey who had him imprisoned leading to Vergil having a deep seated hatred for Wolsey leading him to be prone to exaggeration.

However Source 3 is written by George Cavendish in which he claims that Wolsey was only acting like an Alter Rex to 'disburden the king'. This is contradictory to Source 1 where his Alter Rex like actions were done out of 'ambition' but instead states that Wolsey was held and only held the kings best interests at heart. It also shows he wouldn't have been seen as an Alter Rex as he had 'The King' authority and commandment' showing he was not abusing his power but in fact sanctioned by the King himself. To follow the source goes on to say that 'fulfil and follow the kings mind... the king was wonderfully please.' Even though Wolsey was conducting the Kings affairs and assuming his power he was just following the kings whims and wants and the King was happy with his actions contradicting a belief that Wolsey was disliked. Yet in Source 2 the King is said to want to arrest Wolsey for his actions, so this undermines this source and from our own knowledge we are aware that the King did in fact order the arrest of Wolsey showing Cavendish was giving a romanticised account of the King and Wolsey relationship which in fact wasn't as mutual as Cavendish would have us believe.

Moreover in Source 2 by Edward Hall it is said that he would 'speak fair to the people to win their hearts... fair speaking made the many men believe that he spoke the truth.' This shows that he was not detested by the people as Source 1 suggest but in well loved enough that people were willing to believe him even when he was lying. The people liked him for his flattery and <https://assignbuster.com/how-far-do-the-sources-agree-wolsey-was-disliked-because-he-acted-like-an-alter-rex-essay-sample/>

skill in public speaking, yet later in the source the King disapproves of this and eventually ordered his arrest.

Although Source 3 tells us that he wasn't acting as an Alter Rex, caution must be taken when considering this as George Cavendish was Wolsey's personal assistant in his later life and being under his employment for that long would lead him to see Wolsey in a positive light, plus he was only a personal assistant and was not privy to Wolsey's political actions. Source 2 from Hall is quite reliable as he gathered people's opinion and wrote about it but yet still shows displeasure aimed at Wolsey's Alter Rex actions. Source 3 strongly disagrees with the statement as it supports that Wolsey's actions were done with the intent to help the Kings workload and was well liked for this and had the king's authority. On the other hand Source 2 mildly disagrees with the question as we see that the King wasn't entirely happy with Wolsey's actions.

In conclusion although the sources dispute exactly who dislike Wolsey and the extent of the hatred is debated by the sources there is a general consensus that Wolsey was in fact disliked due to acting like an Alter Rex.